

DETAILED ACTION

This communication is responsive to the amendment filed 1/10/2007.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, and 32 are pending in this application.

Claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 22, 24, 28, and 30 are independent claims. In the amendment filed 9/04/2007, Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, and 32 were amended. This action is made Final.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bedard (US 5801747) in view of Takiguchi (EP000717346A2) further in view of Baker (US006002401A) further in view of Takeuchi et al. (US 6392670).

As per independent claim 1, Bedard teaches an information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, comprising means for displaying a menu of recommended channels, said recommended channels selected based on high past frequency of selection (See Column 4, Lines 49-65 and Column 7, Lines 19-27); means for displaying a menu of categories, said categories containing programs classified into

said categories based on program information (See Column 4, Lines 49-65 and Column 7, Lines 19-27); and means for displaying a menu of media, said menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media (See Column 4, Lines 49-65 and Column 7, Lines 19-27). Bedard does not specifically teach operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation, wherein the operation information entails operation keys are simultaneously operated; and switching means for switching a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, to an information screen of a selected one of the icons, with a predetermined transit screen inserted there between, in response to the operation information, wherein the switching means gradually enlarges the selected icon on the transit screen, to zoom in on the icon.

Takiguchi teaches an operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation (page 19, lines 9-20), wherein the operation information entails operation keys, which are simultaneously operated (Page 19, Lines 21-30); and switching means for switching a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, to an information screen of a selected one of the icons, with a predetermined transit screen inserted there between, in response to the operation information (page 19, lines 9-20), wherein the switching means gradually enlarges the selected icon on the transit screen, to zoom in on the icon (page 19, lines 9-20). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Bedard with the teachings of Takiguchi and include an apparatus for switching a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, to an information screen of a selected one of the

icons, with a predetermined transit screen inserted there between, in response to the operation information, wherein the switching means gradually enlarges the selected icon on the transit screen, to zoom in on the icon with the motivation of provide the user with more information on the screen about the desired subject.

Bedard and Takiguchi do not disclose that the switching means gradually fades display of the selected icon on the transit screen to switch this display to display of the information screen.

Baker teaches that the switching means gradually fades display of the selected icon on the transit screen to switch this display to display of the information screen (column 10, lines 23-41, *navigating a hierarchy using animated icons*, and column 51, Appendix C, *Remove to */*, *animation may include fading of an icon*). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Bedard and Takiguchi with a means to gradually fade display of a selected icon on a transit screen, as taught by Baker, with the motivation to provide an animated interface for the user (column 9, lines 40-41).

Bedard, Takiguchi and Baker do not specifically teach an apparatus wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in the upper portion of each screen. Takeuchi teaches an apparatus wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in the upper portion of each screen (i.e. Figures 9-19). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Bedard, Takiguchi and Baker with the teachings of

Takeuchi and include a title at the top indicating the focused icon with the motivation to provide the user with a convenient method of identifying which icon has been selected.

As per independent claim 3, Bedard teaches a an information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, characterized in that the desired information screen comprises means for displaying a menu of recommended channels, said recommended channels selected based on high past frequency of selection (See Column 4, Lines 49-65 and Column 7, Lines 19-27); means for displaying a menu of categories, said categories containing programs classified into said categories based on program information (See Column 4, Lines 49-65 and Column 7, Lines 19-27); and means for displaying a menu of media, said menu of media representing contents of a plurality of recording/reproducing media (See Column 4, Lines 49-65 and Column 7, Lines 19-27).

Bedard does not teach that icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens, the information providing apparatus comprises operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and switching means for switching a menu screen in an upper layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer lower than a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted there between, and the switching means gradually enlarges the selected group

icon on the first transit screen, to zoom in onto the group icon; and wherein the operation information entails operation keys are simultaneously operated .

Takiguchi teaches that icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens (page 19, lines 9-20, *icons represent hierarchical layers that contain groups of icons*), the information providing apparatus comprises operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation (page 19, lines 9-20), and switching means for switching a menu screen in an upper layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer lower than a selected group icon (page 19, lines 9-20), with a predetermined first transit screen inserted there between, and the switching means gradually enlarges the selected group icon on the first transit screen, to zoom in onto the group icon (page 19, lines 9-20); and wherein the operation information entails operation keys are simultaneously operated (Page 19, Lines 21-30). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Bedard with the teachings of Takiguchi and include an apparatus for switching a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, to an information screen of a selected one of the icons, with a predetermined transit screen inserted there between, in response to the operation information, characterized in that the switching means gradually enlarges the selected icon on the transit screen, to zoom in on the icon with the motivation to provide the user with more information on the screen about the desired subject.

Bedard and Takiguchi do not disclose that the switching means gradually fades display of the selected icon onto which the display is zooming in, on the transit screen, to switch the display to display of the first menu screen in the lower layer.

Baker teaches that the switching means gradually fades display of the selected icon on the transit screen to switch this display to display of the information screen (column 10, lines 23-41, *navigating a hierarchy that uses animated icons*, and column 51, Appendix C, */Remove to */*, *animation may include fading of an icon*). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the teachings of Bedard and Takiguchi with a means to gradually fade display of a selected icon on a transit screen, as taught by Baker, with the motivation to provide an animated interface for the user (column 9, lines 40-41).

Bedard, Takiguchi, and Baker do not specifically teach an apparatus wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in the upper portion of each screen. Takeuchi teaches an apparatus wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in the upper portion of each screen (i.e. Figures 9-19). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Bedard, Takiguchi and Baker with the teachings of Takeuchi and include a title at the top indicating the focused icon with the motivation to provide the user with a convenient method of identifying which icon has been selected.

As per claim 5, which is dependent on claim 3, the combination of Bedard, Takiguchi, Baker, and Takeuchi teach that the group icon in the lower layer has a

second menu screen in a lower layer, on which group icons are further arranged (Takiguchi page 19, lines 9-20, *directory E is a much lower level*), and the switching means switches the first menu screen in the lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, to the second menu screen in the lower layer of the selected group icon (Takiguchi page 19, lines 9-20), with a predetermined second transit screen inserted there between, in response to the operation information, gradually enlarges the selected group icon on the transit screen to zoom in on the group icon (Takiguchi page 19, lines 9-20). Baker further teaches that the switching means gradually fades display of the group icon onto which the display is zooming in, on the second transit screen, to switch the display to display of the second menu screen in the lower layer (column 10, lines 23-41, *navigating a hierarchy that uses animated icons*, and column 51, Appendix C, */*Remove to */*, *animation may include fading of an icon*).

Claims 7, 9 and 11 are similar in scope to claims 1, 3, and 5; therefore they are rejected under similar rationale.

Claims 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, and 32 are similar in scope to claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 respectively, and are therefore rejected under similar rationale.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 9/04/2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In regards to the Applicant's argument that the references cited do not teach a plurality of reproducing media. Applicant attempts to limit the scope of "reproducing media" to a digital video disk (DVD), a hard disk device (HDD), and a compact disk

player (CD) are arranged from the top in the center. From the top side in the right end, icons for specifying D-VHS, DVD-R, and VHS" (See Page 16 of the response). However, the specification does not limit the recording/reproducing media to only those, nor does the specification require that the reproducing/recording media have to be one of those. Therefore, unless the Applicant clearly amends the claims to define what recording/reproducing media is, Examiner argues that channels and TV station qualify as recording/reproducing media in the broadest sense of the term.

In regards to the Applicants argument that Takiguchi does not teach "wherein the operation information entails operation keys, which are simultaneously operated," the Examiner respectfully disagrees. Takiguchi teaches, "When the mouse button 304 is still held down with the shift key pressed, the display is zoomed out until the display shown in Fig. 17 appears." (Page 19, Lines 29-30) Therefore, Takiguchi clearly teaches simultaneous operation of buttons in his invention (i.e. the shift key and the mouse button).

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Boris Pesin whose telephone number is (571) 272-4070. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday except every other Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kristine Kincaid can be reached on (571) 272-4063. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.